

Appln No. 10/672,186
Amdt date September 19, 2008
Reply to Office action of March 19, 2008

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant's Representatives conducted a telephone interview with Examiner Daniel C. Murray on September 18, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Participants in the interview for applicants were Robert A. Green, Peter Emerson, Michael Greene and Christopher Hambleton. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Murray for the courtesies extended to them in the course of the interview.

During the interview, applicants' representatives discussed the Andreev et al. reference (U.S. Patent Publication US 2001/0018759 A1), in which the routing of different regions is not performed independently. In fact, Andreev et al. specifically teaches a "locking mechanism" that prevents other nets from looking in or interacting with a particular region of the board under construction. This locking mechanism prevents all nets from being considered independently and potentially simultaneously.

As pointed out in the interview, the claimed method requires consideration of "all required connections in parallel independently" (claim 1, lines 2-3; claim 6, lines 3-4), thus distinguishing over the method of Andreev et al. where some regions are locked out while others are routed. In practice, the steps of the claimed method can be performed either sequentially by a single processor or simultaneously by multiple processors. By its nature, the method enables all connections to be considered simultaneously if desired.

Accordingly, applicants submit that claims 1 and 6 are not anticipated by Andreev et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b). Claims 2-5 are dependent on claim 1 and therefore include all of the limitations of claim 1 and additional limitations therein. As such, these claims are also allowable based on claim 1 and the additional limitations.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing remarks, applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art and that all rejections have been overcome. As such, allowance of the pending claims is requested. If there are any remaining

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issues that can be addressed over the telephone, Examiner Murray is cordially invited to call applicants' attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP

By



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